

TESTIMONY REGARDING BILL NO. 310

My name is Brian A. Doyle. I am a principal in the law firm of Ferguson, Doyle & Chester, P.C., located in Rocky Hill, Connecticut. This firm represents numerous public and private sector labor unions, including the American Federation of Teachers Connecticut.

I am here today to testify regarding Raised Bill No. 310. The Bill is entitled, *An Act Concerning the Removal of Individuals from the State Child Abuse and Neglect Registry*. This Raised Bill directs Department of Children & Family (hereinafter "DCF") to create a system that would allow for an individual whose name is on the DCF Registry to apply to have his or her name removed from the Registry. The proposed legislation allows for an individual to apply for removal from the Registry after five years and if the applicant can show good cause for his or her removal from the Registry.

This legislation is of critical importance to many school employees, child care workers and other employees whose names are on the DCF Registry. I know a number of these individuals who have been placed on the Registry without a substantiation appeal hearing. This legislation would give the opportunity to an individual who is on the Registry to apply to remove their name after they have been on the Registry for five years.

The work that DCF does on behalf of children in the state is important work and certainly the DCF Registry serves an important purpose in protecting children from adults who have neglected or abused a child. However, no system is perfect and mistakes are occasionally made. Additionally, an individual ought to have the right to prove that they have rehabilitated him or herself.

I urge the enactment of Raised Bill No. 310. The proposed legislation offers someone a second chance but requires proof that an individual is rehabilitated and has taken responsibility for their actions or omissions.